Acknowledging letters from MPs

35. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of letters received by him and the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies from Member(s) of Parliament during the last one year and the details of the action taken thereon;

(b) the number of letters that have not yet been acknowledged/replied, so far, togetherwith the reasons thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite disposal thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) During the last one year, a total number of 52 letters have been received from the Members of Parliament addressed to the Agriculture Minister and Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies concerning the affairs of the cooperative societies. Out of which 38 letters have been disposed by giving reply to the Members of Parliament. The remaining 14 letters are under process and for reply to Members of Parliament.

Swaminathan Commission report on problems of Kerala

36. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Swaminathan Commission appointed to study the problems of various districts in Kerala facing agricultural distress has submitted its report; and

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Study to suggest programmes for development of Kuttanad wetlands in Alappuzha district and for mitigation of agrarian distress in Idukki district has been assigned to M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation. The Foundation has submitted its final report in respect of development of Kuttanad wetlands in Alappuzha district on 6th August, 2007.

(b) Details of recommended activities are given in the Statement (*See* below) Government will consult various stakeholders on the recommendations made by the Foundation.

Statement

Details of recommended activities contained in the report by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation on Measures to Mitigate Agrarian Distress in Alappuzha and Kuttanad Wetland Ecosystem

Sl. No	Details of Activity
A	*Strengthening Ecological security*
Task 1	Protection and ecological restoration of the water spread area
Task 2	Measures for salinity and flood management in Kuttanad
2.1	Modernisation of TMB to manage salinity and minimize ecological decay

Sl. No	Details of Activity
2.2	Improving the efficiency of the TSW and leading channel
2.3	Regulation of floodwater in *Kayal* area near C and D and Rani-Chithira Blocks
2.4	Complete construction of AC canal with removal of all blocks
2.5	Monitoring and assessment
2.6	Supporting research study by a consortium of competent organizations on TMB operation and Kayal ecology
Task 3	Measures for pollution control
3.1	The use of domestic toilets linked to ferro-cement septic tanks either individually or a cluster of few houses
Task 4	Total elimination of aquatic weeds
4.1	Systematic programme all over Kuttanad and rest of Alappuzha for elimination of water hyacinth
Task 5	Measures for augmenting biodiversity in the backwaters
5.1	Promote mangrove restoration along the banks of Vembanad Kayal and Kayamkulam Kayal
5.2	Programme for revival of productivity for Pearl spot *(karimeen)* and giant prawns on a life cycle approach
Task 6	Improving health and sanitation
6.1	Install roof top rainwater harvesting for all houses using ferro-cement tanks
	Sub Total
B. I.	*Agriculture based livelihoods*
Task 1	Declaring Kuttanad as a Special Agricultural Zone
Task 2	Provide infrastructure support to paddy cultivation
2.1	Need for restoration of KWS, Onattukara and Thuravoor-Pattanakkadu rivers, canals, drains and water bodies like ponds
2.2	*Orumuttus* Creation of 33 permanent Kottachira across Kariyar
2.3	Provision of other infrastructure to promote paddy cultivation
2.3.1	Supply of pumps and Agricultural machinery for common use at padasekharam level
2.3.2	Onattukara first paddy cultivation charges
2.3.3	Promotion of rice-sesame rotation in Onattukara
Task 3	Enforce a Crop Calendar
3.1	Certified seed production for Kuttanad and Onattukara

Sl. No	Details of Activity
3.2	Support for soil test based fertilizer application
3.3	Pest forecasting and early warning service
Task 4	Strengthening research and extension
4:1	Promoting location-specific research, training and capacity building
4.1.2	Establishing Centre for Farm Machinery Research, Development and Training
4.1.3	R & D on coconut climbing machine
4.1.4	The capacity of Duck Hatchery at Niranam
Task 5	Economic Viability
5.1	Price and Marketing
5.1.1	Establishment of paddy godowns in Kuttanad
5.2	Farm labour employment security and welfare
5.2.2	Training youths in skilled agricultural jobs like farm machinery operation
5.2.3	Establishing and supporting 'Agri-Clinics' in study area
5.3	Farmer and Farm labourer welfare measures
5.3.1	Production bonus enhancement in Purakkad *Kari*
5.3.2	Immediate relief to farmers for restarting agricultural and economic activities
5.3.3	Establishing crushes for the use of women labourers
Task 6	Coconut-based enterprises and integrated farming
6.1.1	Supporting a crash programme on re-planting diseased and low yielding palms
6.1.2	Massive coconut revival progromme for improving health and productivity
6.1.3	One-time support for establishing integrated livestock and crop production in garden land
6.1.4	Providing insurance cover to ducks - subsidy on premium.
6.1.5	Promotion of cluster based and market linked value addition- one time support to clusters for infrastructure
6.2	Paddy fish integration for economic and ecological security and farmers' training
6.3	The DoA-DoF- KAU jointly train and build the capacity of farmers
	B.II Inland Fisheries based livelihoods
Task 1	Actions to promote fishery wealth of Vembanadu Kayal
1.1	Cluster based Cage—subsidy support
1.2	Ranching, involving large-scale hatchery-reared production of post-larvae

Sl. No	Details of Activity
1.3	Fish hatcheries for raising adequate quality fingerlings
1.4	Fresh water prawn and *karimeen* urgent conservation measures RRS. Kum
Task 2	Promoting fishing infrastructure, capacity and fishermen welfare
2.1	Group based enterprise on ornamental fish culture
2.2	Cold storage facility for the fishing communities
2.3	Training and capacity building of fishermen and fingerlings production, improving sanitation and hygiene in processing units in Kuttanad
	B.II Water tourism in Kuttanad and local ecology
Task 1	Infrastructure support to facilitate responsible tourism
1.2	Introduction and promotion of farm tourism involving farm families

Shrimp culture

37. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Shrimp culture in Andhra Pradesh is being badly affected by the high mortality rate of tiger shrimp owing to changes in climatic conditions;

(b) if so, whether any relief measures like developing the domestic market, buying shrimp at minimum support price, providing seed for export variety fish such as groper and red Philadelphia to enable farmers to shift to pisciculture since it is safer than Shrimp culture are being taken;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) It is stated that shrimp culture is mainly affected on account of White Spot Disease and slow growth of shrimp due to adverse climatic conditions, such as fluctuation in temperature, unseasonal rains, etc. It is, however, reported that the mortality rate is not severe compared to earlier seasons.

(b) and (c) The following measures have been taken to enable the shrimp farmers to diversify the culture practices as well as for adopting Good Management Practices for the sustainable development of shrimp culture:

(i) Based on the findings of a Due Diligence Team, the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) has approved a proposal to set up a Multiplication Centre by availing technology from a Hawaiian firm to produce Specific Pathogen Free seeds of *P. monodon* for supply to the shrimp farmers.

(ii) Risk analysis/assessment study has been undertaken to study and advise the Government on the pros and cons of introducing exotic shrimp variety